

Subject: Coin found 2-3ft. underground
in Henry Co., IA.

See Also: Hovey, Melvin (Mondovi, WI)

Harlan, Edgar R.

(Des Moines, IA)

1934-1936

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Historical, Memorial and Art
Department of Iowa

EDGAR R. HARLAN, CURATOR

Des Moines

January 23, 1934

American Numismatic Society,
New York City.

Gentlemen:

I inclose a three-cent piece dated 1865. The owner desires to know what, if any, premium is offered for this coin.

I have sometimes visited your collections, met some of the members of your staff, and desire to have your suggestion as to how and from whom I can obtain quotations that are based on justice for the various coins that turn up now in these distressful times.

Sincerely yours,

Edgar R. Harlan

Curator

Inclosure
ERH-C

January 27, 1934.

Mr. Edgar R. Harlan, Curator
Historical, Memorial and Art Dept. of Iowa
Des Moines, Iowa.

Dear Sir:

The three cent piece you enclosed has absolutely no premium. To begin with it is a common date and vast quantities of these have been saved. Also, its condition from a collector's standpoint is so poor that no collector would want it. If you ever have other coins you wish to know about we would be glad to have you write us.

Very truly yours,

HW:JG

Curator

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Historical, Memorial and Art
Department of Iowa

EDGAR R. HARLAN, CURATOR

Des Moines

October 8, 1934

*There is a good acct
of the history of this period
for N.Y. Hist Soc building
at New York City
after 1932*

American Numismatic Society,
New York City, N Y

Gentlemen:

I am sending you a collection of materials of interest and curiosity, numbering 19 buttons and portion of an emblem, stated to have been found in or near the region of Fort Crawford, Prairie du Chien, Wisconsin.

Will you examine them, and if you can identify any without too much trouble, do so.

First and last, Prairie du Chien and the region about the mouth of the Wisconsin river has been the scene of visits from as many different military and quasi-public organizations as any point upon the Mississippi river.

I will be inclined to share these with you if there are duplicates and if they have any attraction for you.

Sincerely yours,

ERH

ERH-C

Curator

data from about 1812 - 1830

*W. H. Colver
600 W 136 St*

October 15, 1934.

Historical, Memorial and Art Dept. of Iowa
Des Moines, Iowa.

Attention: Edgar R. Harlan, Curator

Gentlemen:

• Your package of buttons reached here Thursday just prior to my going off for a long weekend. I have looked these through but see nothing that would really interest us, as we confine ourselves to coins and medals. I am writing, however, one of our members, Mr. W. L. Calver, 600 W. 136th Street, New York City, who is probably the best posted man in this country on military buttons. If he is in town and I can get hold of him I am sure he can identify all of these for you.

Very truly yours,

HW:JG

• Curator

October 17, 1934.

Historical, Memorial & Art Dept. of Iowa
Des Moines. Iowa.

Gentlemen: Attention: Mr. E. R. Harlan

Mr. Calver has just looked over the buttons and has attributed all of them. They apparently date from about 1812 to 1835. There is nothing very unusual about these buttons. The two of the Riflemen Brigade are somewhat scarce. I am returning all of them, and if you care to, we would appreciate your returning one of the Light Artillery, of which you have a duplicate.

Very truly yours,

HW:JG

Curator

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Historical, Memorial and Art
Department of Iowa

EDGAR R. HARLAN, CURATOR

Des Moines

October 27, 1934

The American Numismatic Society,
155 & Broadway,
New York.

Gentlemen:

We appreciate the information
concerning the buttons sent you recently.

As you expressed a desire for
the duplicate Light Artillery button, we
are sending it and two other duplicate
buttons that may or may not be of use to
you.

Very truly yours,

E. R. Harlan
5

ERH:EP
Enclosed

October 29, 1934.

Historical, Memorial & Art Dept. of Iowa
Des Moines, Iowa.

Gentlemen: Attention: Edgar R. Harlan, Curator.

We beg to thank you for the three buttons
that you have sent us. I am sure that Mr. Calver
is anxious to get the one of the Light Artillery.

Very truly yours,

HW: JG

Curator

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Historical, Memorial and Art
Department of Iowa

EDGAR R. HARLAN, CURATOR

Des Moines

March 13, 1935

American Numismatic Society
150 Fifth Street & Broadway
New York City, New York

Gentlemen:

I enclose a supposed coin that is said to have been found under ground, two or three feet, in Henry County, Iowa, within the last twelve months. This statement comes two or three persons removed and I neither believe nor challenge it. But what is the coin?

I send also a stick pin, loaned to me for the purpose of having it identified and appraised. Identification, if it should go to the extent, of giving its place in the history of coins in the United States. In its mutilated condition I doubt if you will be interested in it, but if you are I will obtain for you the privilege of acquiring it, or will acquire it myself at the price you put upon it, if the owner desires to accept money for it.

Sincerely yours,

ER Harlan

Curator

ERH/LSW

March 20, 1935.

Mr. Edgar R. Harlan
Historical, Memorial and Art Dept.
Des Moines, Iowa.

Dear Sir:

The coin dug out of the ground was struck by the Roman Emperor Trajan Decius 249 to 251 A. D. It was minted in Egypt for that country. These coins and similar ones have been found in very large quantities. Returning travellers from Egypt generally bring back a few of these as every guide works these pieces off on the tourists. It must have been dropped there by someone in fairly recent years. It is strange how Roman coins have been found in this country. The other day I looked at a number of Roman coins dug up on Long Island, more or less near the surface. They must have been put there by some Italian within a few years. The piece on the stick pin is valueless. It is not a coin but a charm sold by curio shops as a gold quarter dollar. There are certain collectors who collect these charms but only in fine condition. Your piece is worth only the gold value. I am herewith returning both pieces.

Very truly yours,

HW:JG

Curator

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Historical, Memorial and Art
Department of Iowa

EDGAR R. HARLAN, CURATOR

Des Moines

May 7, 1935

American Numismatics Society
Broadway at 156th Street
New York City, New York

Gentlemen:

I send herewith a coin or medal that was excavated a year or two ago, in digging a basement for a building in Ottumwa, Iowa. It is so badly deteriorated that I am ashamed to send it to you, but the encouragement to people who have unusual things makes the practice worthwhile, provided anything can be found that has an interest to you. I would be glad if I had some rule or method by which to know when and whether an object worthwhile has any interest to you.

I also send a small box with miscellaneous coins, which belonged to my father. After he died, about ten years ago, they were kept by a brother, until recently. If you would look at each of them and then tell me what, if any, value each one has, I will engage to give to you whichever one you are most interested in, for your courtesy.

Sincerely yours,

Edgar R. Harlan
Curator

ERH/LSW

May 10, 1935.

Mr. E. R. Harlan
Historical, Memorial and Art Dept.
Des Moines, Iowa.

Dear Mr. Harlan:

Your letter and package at hand. The medal dug up has absolutely no value. It is interesting in this way and in a very backhanded way at that. It seems to be a very poor cast copy of a medal made in white metal which was issued as an advertising card by the Union Coffee Company of New York. Fifty or sixty years ago they got out a series of these medals bearing the portraits of different actresses and these were distributed fairly generally as an advertising scheme. Why one should go to the trouble of making a cast of one of these things I cannot imagine.

I have gone over all of your coins and have put approximate prices on each one. There is nothing rare and as a matter of fact most of them are hardly salable, as the condition is against them and especially as all of them can be procured in most excellent shape. Under separate cover, I am returning this to you. I have taken advantage of your offer and kept out one of the pieces. This happens to be a Mexican silver dollar of the Potosi mint which we did not have of that date. Its value to buy would be its face value of fifty or sixty cents.

Very truly yours,

HE:JG

Curator

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Historical, Memorial and Art
Department of Iowa

Des Moines

EDGAR R. HARLAN, CURATOR

August 14, 1935

American Numismatic Society
155-156 Broadway
New York, N. Y.

Gentlemen:

I beg to enclose a coin list of Romano's Coin Shop. I have a good many requests for the information it contains, provided it may be regarded as reliable. If you have an impression with respect to this question, I would appreciate your opinion and the return of the catalog at your convenience.

Sincerely yours,

Edgar R. Harlan

ERH:AH

August 19, 1935.

Mr. E. R. Harlan
Historical, Memorial and Art Department
Des Moines, Iowa.

Dear Sir:

We know nothing directly about Romane's Coin Shop. I know that some of his advertising has been misleading. He, however, has been doing a large mail order business and sometime ago had fourteen girls employed. We know nothing at all of his financial responsibility. The coin circular you sent appears to be accurate and I can see nothing in it evasive. It, however, looks a little like a come-on game to subscribe 25¢ more for another circular. To my mind there is a joker in his request to send \$1.00 or more with coins sent for sale because from our experience the large bulk of coins held by people in general have next to no value. They might send on, say 200 copper coins - the fee would be \$4.00 and the coins possibly would not be worth \$1.00 so that the person selling the coins would pay out between \$3.00 and \$4.00 to get rid of them. However, he seems to be straightforward in telling you what you should do and what he will do.

Very truly yours,

HW:JG

Curator

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Historical, Memorial and Art
Department of Iowa

Des Moines

EDGAR R. HARLAN, CURATOR

November 5, 1935

American Numismatic Society
Broadway between 155th & 156th Sts.
New York City

Gentlemen:

I beg to submit to you a coin which puzzles me and which I have not seen in duplicate. Will you kindly give to me the connection it may have had as a token or a medal, and if you can do so, tell me how a current one-cent piece could be utilized for this purpose and not change it more than this is changed.

Sincerely yours,

Edgar R. Harlan

Curator

ERH:AH
Enc-1

November 13, 1935.

Mr. E. R. Harlan
Historiall, Memorial and Art Dept.
Des Moines, Iowa.

Dear Mr. Harlan:

The coin which you sent on and which we are herewith returning is known as a Civil War token. These were made privately by various die-sinkers throughout the country chiefly in 1863 until the government put a stop to this work towards the end of that year. They come in two classes, those with merchants' names on them and those with simply political legends. They were bought wholesale by merchants and used in making change, on account of the scarcity of small money during the Civil War period. There are about 8000 varieties of these Civil War tokens and they bring anywhere from one cent up, according to variety and condition. Your piece is not of the commonest but being so badly worn has no numismatic value.

Very truly yours,

HW:JG

Curator

February 14, 1936.

Mr. E. R. Harlan
Historical, Memorial and Art Dept.
Des Moines, Iowa.

Dear Mr. Harlan:

Your letter at hand and today we received the coin from Young Bear. I have sent it back to him and have written him. Unfortunately the coin has no value.

Very truly yours,

HW:JG

Curator

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Historical, Memorial and Art
Department of Iowa

Des Moines

EDGAR R. HARLAN, CURATOR

February 5, 1936

American Numismatic Society
Broadway between 155th and 156th Sts.
New York City, N. Y.

Gentlemen:

I have a very dear friend who has an old coin
which he wishes to learn the value of.

This friend, Mr. Young Bear of Tama, Iowa, is
a full blood North American Indian of the Sac and
Fox nation, and writes to me in his own language
which I have had interpreted. If he writes in
addition to this letter something of his own for
you, it can be translated by your neighbor society,
The Museum of the American Indians, Heye Foundation.
If he writes nothing, kindly give to his matter your
best attention and write direct to him at Tama. He
will get the full sense of what you say through his
own family being of excellent education in the
English language.

Sincerely yours,

Edgar R. Harlan

THS:AT

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JUSTICE ELMA G. ALBERT
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Historical, Memorial and Art
Department of Iowa

Des Moines

EDGAR R. HARLAN, CURATOR

April 28, 1936

American Numismatic Society
Broadway between 155th and 156th Sts.
New York City

Gentlemen:

I am sending by express to you, under an insurance of \$50.00, certain objects described in a memorandum, of which I also send you a copy, and ask that you determine if you can, in accordance with that memorandum, and send the information to me to be sent according to the memorandum, to Mrs. Hovey.

If it is outside your province in any respect, and you obtain the opinion of anyone else upon it, make it clear that this material does not belong to me, and I am not authorized to make any charge or expense to Mrs. Hovey.

Sincerely yours,

ER Harlan

ERH:AH
Enc-1

Memorandum

April 28, 1936

Today there came in Ereta Hovey and Melvin Hovey, her son, who reside at 110 East Washington Avenue, and left a silver cup with certain inscriptions not known to me, a coin^{or} medal with three smaller medals attached thereto, all of which appear to be of foreign coinage. Also a silver belt with four medals or medallions, each different, and a buckle. I have engaged with them to pay the expense on these, under an insurance of \$50.00 and send them to the American Numismatic Society in New York City, and ask that society to give the interpretation of each of the inscriptions on all these, also to give their appraisement on each separate article, and when the information is received by me to give it faithfully to them by letter, at once. I shall inform the society that these are not for sale until, and unless, the appraisement the society puts on them appeals to the owner, and she is advised fully in all the premises.

Curator.

MMH:AM

May 6, 1936

Mr. Edgar R. Harlan, Curator,
Historical, Memorial & Art Dept. of Iowa,
Des Moines, Iowa

Dear Mr. Harlan:

The package containing the cup,
shoulder strap, etc., is at hand. I will
see what I can do about this, although it
is entirely out of our line.

Very truly yours,

Curator

HW ks

June 2, 1936

Mr. Edgar R. Harlan, Curator,
Historical, Memorial & Art Dept. of Iowa,
Des Moines, Iowa

Dear Mr. Harlan:

I have delayed reporting on the shoulder belt, etc. I was hoping somebody would come into our place who could tell me about these objects, but nobody has been in and I did not care to go to the expense of having them appraised down town. They are undoubtedly of Danish work. The inscription on the cup is Danish and my assistant has translated most of it. This translation I am enclosing.

As to the value of the cup, I have been unable to find out, except we had an offer of about \$75. for it. It probably is worth a little more.

The shoulder belt would have only a nominal value because a thing like this is seldom in demand. The coins mounted up to form a pendant are of no value as coins and are not unusual enough to be sought after.

Do you wish these returned by express collect?

Very truly yours,

Curator

HW ks
ENCL.

TRUSTEES

GOVERNOR CLYDE L. HERRING
CHIEF JUSTICE MORRIS F. DONEGAN
JUSTICE ELMA G. ALBERT
JUSTICE WILLIAM H. HAMILTON
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Historical, Memorial and Art
Department of Iowa

EDGAR R. HARLAN, CURATOR

Des Moines

June 20, 1936

American Numismatic Society
Broadway bet. 155th & 156th Sts.
New York City

Gentlemen:

With respect to the materials I sent to you, and on which you reported that the cup or goblet had been by some of your friends stated to be worth about \$75, and the other materials would not be of any money interest to you, I have to advise that the parties leaving those with me, to secure a valuation on them, advise, as of June 18 from Mondovi, Wisconsin, that they would like to have sent to them the sum of \$75 and the cup remain with you, while the other materials are sent to them. I presume they may be sent with charges to follow for carriage.

The address is Mr. Melvin Hovey and Mrs. Brita Hovey, Mondovi, Route #5, Wisconsin.

Kindly advise me of your disposition of the materials, so that I can clear my own records in accordance therewith.

Sincerely yours,

ERH

ERH:AH

June 24, 1936

Mr. Edgar R. Harlan, Curator,
Historical, Memorial and Art Dept. of Iowa,
Des Moines, Iowa

Dear Sir:

The person that appraised the cup at \$75.
simply said that they might take it for that; however,
that person is now in Europe and will not be back until
October.

There is another person I can see and if I can
get that sum of money for the cup I will take it and
will let you know shortly.

Very truly yours,

Curator

HE ks